



County of Los Angeles  
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August 8, 2005

To: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair  
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Supervisor Don Knabe  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen  
Chief Administrative Officer

**MOTION TO SUPPORT SB 861 (SPEIER) – DANGEROUS AND VICIOUS DOGS  
(ITEM NO. 51-A ON THE SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA FOR AUGUST 9, 2005)**

Item No. 51-A on the August 9, 2005 Supplemental Agenda is a motion by Supervisor Antonovich to support SB 861 (Speier), which would allow cities and counties to enact dog breed-specific ordinances to address public safety and welfare concerns in their communities.

Existing law regulates potentially dangerous and vicious dogs, as specified, and provides that nothing in its provisions shall be construed to prevent a city or county from adopting or enforcing its own program for the control of potentially dangerous or vicious dogs, provided that no program shall regulate these dogs in a manner that is specific as to breed.

SB 861, as amended on July 5, 2005, would allow cities and counties to enact dog breed-specific ordinances pertaining to mandatory spay or neuter programs, and breeding requirements, provided that no program shall institute a ban specific as to breed. In addition, this bill would require jurisdictions that implement such programs, or requirements, to compile statistical information relating to dog bites, and submit it on a quarterly basis to the State Veterinarian to be used to track the effectiveness of this measure.

The Department of Animal Care and Control indicates that SB 861 would allow your Board to adopt an ordinance governing specific breeds of dogs, as long as the regulations do not ban specific breeds. The Department recommends support of this bill

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because it will allow the County greater ability to regulate and control aggressive breeds of dogs through amendments to Chapter 10.37 of the Los Angeles County Code that addresses the issue of potentially dangerous and vicious dogs.

The Department of Health Services (DHS) also analyzed SB 861 because it is responsible for dog-bite quarantines in the County, and produces a summary report on rabies-control activities which is submitted to the State on an annual basis. DHS supports the concept of SB 861, however, it is concerned that the bill does not provide funding to address the cost increases associated with the collection and submission of statistical information relating to dog bites to the State Veterinarian. The Department indicates that obtaining information relating to dog bites is complex, and would require additional staff in order to comply with the requirements of SB 861.

Based on the departments' recommendations, and consistent with the existing County ordinance regarding potentially dangerous and vicious dogs, **we recommend support for SB 861. In addition, we will work with the author of the bill to address DHS' concerns that the bill does not provide funding to address the cost increases associated with the collection and submission of statistical information to the State Veterinarian.**

SB 861 passed the Assembly Local Government Committee by a vote of 7 to 3, and is now on the Assembly floor awaiting third reading. This bill is supported by the League of California Cities and the City of Concord, and is opposed by the American Canine Foundation, American Dog Breeders Association, American Kennel Club, American Pit Bull Rescue Association, Animal Council, Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights, California Veterinary Medical Association, and many other organizations.

DEJ:GK  
MAL:MR:ib

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
County Counsel  
Department of Animal Care and Control  
Department of Health Services